

A

PROPOSAL

For the universal Use

Of *Irish* Manufacture,

IN

Cloaths and Furniture of Houses, &c.

UTERLY

Rejecting and Renouncing

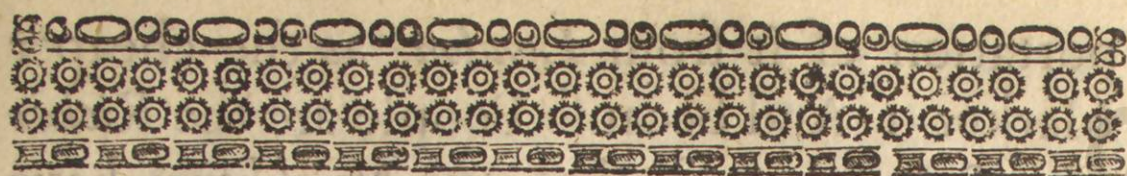
Every Thing wearable that comes from

ENGLAND.



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Houses of the Oireachtas



A

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IT is the peculiar Felicity and Prudence of the People in this Kingdom, that whatever Commodities or Productions lye under the greatest Discouragements from *England*, those are what we are sure to be most industrious in cultivating and spreading. *Agriculture*, which hath been the principal Care of all wise Nations, and for the Encouragement whereof there are so many Statute-Laws in *England*, we countenance so well, that the Landlords are every where by *penal Clauses* absolutely prohibiting their Tenants from Plowing; not satisfy'd to confine them within certain Limitations, as it is the Practice of the *English*; one effect of which is already seen in the prodigious dearness of Corn, and the Im-

portation of It from *London*, as the cheaper Market : And because People are the *Riches* of a Country, and that our *Neighbours* have done, and are doing all that in them lye, to make our Wooll a Drug to us, and a Monopoly to them ; therefore the Politick Gentlemen of *Ireland* have depopulated vast Tracts of the best Land, for the feeding of Sheep.

I could fill a Volume as large as the *History of the Wise Men of Gotham* with a Catalogue only of some wonderful Laws and Customs we have observ'd within thirty Years past. 'Tis true indeed, our beneficial Traffick of Wooll with *France*, hath been our only Support for several Years past, furnishing us all the little Money we have to pay our Rents and go to Market. But our Merchants assure me, *This Trade hath received a great Damp by the present fluctuating Condition of the Coin in France ; and that most of their Wine is paid for in Specie, without carrying thither any Commodity from hence.*

However, since we are so universally bent upon enlarging our *Flocks*, it may be worth enquiring what we shall do with our Wooll, in case *Barnstable* shou'd be over-stock'd, and our *French Commerce* shou'd fail?

I should wish the Parliament had thought fit to have suspended their Regulation of *Church* Matters, and Enlargements of the *Prerogative* 'till a more convenient Time, because they did not appear very pressing (at least to the Persons *principally concerned*) and instead of those great Refinements in *Politicks* and *Divinity*, had *amus'd* Themselves and their Committees a little with the *State of the Nation*. For Example: What if the House of Commons had thought fit to make a Resolution *Nemine Contradicente* against wearing any Cloth or Stuff in their Families, which were not of the Growth and Manufacture of this Kingdom? What if they had extended it so far as utterly to exclude all Silks, Velvets, Calicoes, and the whole *Lexicon* of Female Fopperies; and declared, that whoever acted otherwise, shou'd be deemed and reputed *an Enemy to the Nation*? What if they had sent up such a Resolution to be agreed to by the House of Lords, and by their own Practice and Encouragement spread the Execution of it in their several Countries? What if we shou'd agree to make *burying in Woollen* a *Fashion*, as our Neighbours have made it a *Law*? What if the Ladies wou'd be content with *Irish* Stuffs for the Furniture of their Houses,

for

for Gowns and Petticoats to themselves and their Daughters? Upon the whole, & to crown all the rest; Let a firm Resolution be taken by *Male and Female*, never to appear with one single Shred that comes from *England*; *And let all the People say, A M E N.*

I hope and believe nothing could please his Majesty better than to hear that his Loyal Subjects of both Sexes in this Kingdom celebrated his *Birth-Day* (now approaching) *universally* clad in their own Manufacture. Is there Vertue enough left in this deluded People to save them from the brink of Ruin? If the Mens Opinion may be taken, the Ladies will look as handsom in Stuffs as Brocades, and since all will be equal, there may be room enough to employ their Wit and Fancy in chusing and matching of Patterns and Colours. I heard the late Arch Bishop of Tuam mention a pleasant Observation of some Body's; *that Ireland would never be happy till a Law were made for burning every Thing that came from England, except their People and their Coals*; Nor am I even yet for lessening the Number of those Exceptions.

Non tanti mitra est, non tanti Judicis ostrum.

But

But I shou'd rejoyce to see a *Stay-Lace* from *England* be thought *scandalous*, and become a Topick for Censure at *Visits* and *Tea-Tables*.

If the unthinking Shopkeepers in this Town had not been utterly destitute of common Sense, they wou'd have made some *Proposal to the Parliament*, with a *Petition* to the purpose I have mention'd; promising to Improve the *Cloaths and Stuffs of the Nation* into all possible Degrees of *Fineness and Colours*, and engaging not to play the *Knave* according to their Custom, by *Exacting and Imposing* upon the Nobility and Gentry either as to the *Prices or the Goodness*. For I remember in *London* upon a general Mourning, the *Rascally Mercers and Woollen Drapers*, would in four and twenty Hours raise their *Cloaths and Silks* to above a double Price; and if the Mourning continued long, then come Whingeing with *Petitions* to the Court, that they were ready to *Starve*, and their *Fineries lay upon their Hands*.

I could wish our Shopkeepers would immediately think on this *Proposal*, addressing it to all Persons of Quality and others; but first be sure to get some Body who can write Sense, to put it into Form.

I think it needless to exhort the *Clergy* to follow this good Example, because in a little time,

time, those among them who are so unfortunate to have had their Birth and Education in this Country, will think themselves abundantly happy when they can afford Irish Crape, and an Athlone Hat; and as to the others I shall not presume to direct them. I have indeed seen the present Arch Bishop of Dublin clad from Head to Foot in our own Manufacture; and yet, under the Rose be it spoken, His Grace deserves as good a Gown as any Prelate in Christendom.

I have not Courage enough to offer one syllable on this Subject to their Honours of the Army : Neither have I sufficiently consider'd the great Importance of Scarlet and Gold-Lace.

The Fable in Ovid of Arachne and Pallas, is to this Purpose. The Goddesses had heard of one Arachne a young Virgin, very famous for Spinning and Weaving; They both met upon a Tryal of Skill; and Pallas finding herself almost equalled in her own Art, stung with Rage and Envy, knockt her Rival down, turned her into a Spyder, enjoynig her to Spin and Weave for Ever, out of her own Bowels, and in a very narrow Compass. I confess, that from a Boy, I always pity'd poor Arachne, and cou'd never heartily love the Goddess on account of so cruel and unjust a Sentence; which however is fully executed upon Us by England,
with

with further Additions of *Rigor* and *Severity*. For the greatest part of *our Bowels and Vitals* are extracted, without allowing us the Liberty of *Spinning* and *Weaving* them.

The Scripture tells us, that *Oppression makes a wise Man mad*; therefore, consequently speaking, the Reason why some Men are not *Mad*, is because they are not *Wise*: However, it were to be wish'd that *Oppression* would in time teach a little *Wisdom* to *Fools*.

I was much delighted with a Person who hath a great Estate in this Kingdom, upon his Complaints to me, *how grievously P O O R England suffers by Impositions from Ireland. That we convey our own Wooll to France in spite of all the Harpyes at the Custom-House. That Mr. Shutleworth, and others on the Cheshire Coasts are such Fools to Sell us their Bark at a good Price for Tanning our own Hydes into Leather; with other Enormities of the like weight and kind.* To which I will venture to add some more: *That the Mayoralty of this City is always executed by an Inhabitant, and often by a Native, which might as well be done by a Deputy, with a moderate Salary, whereby P O O R England lose at least one thousand Pounds a Year upon the Ballance. That the Governing of this Kingdom costs the Lord Lientenant two Thousand four Hun-*

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dred Pounds a Year, so much net Loss to POOR England. That the people of Ireland presume to dig for Coals in their own Grounds; and the Farmers in the County of Wicklow send their Turf to the very Market of Dublin, to the great Discouragement of the Coal Trade at Moltyn and White-haven. That the Revenues of the Post-Office here, so righteously belonging to the English Treasury, as arising chiefly from our own Commerce with each other, shou'd be remitted to London, clogg'd with that grievous Burthen of Exchange, and the Pensions pay'd out of the Irish Revenues to English Favourites, shou'd lye under the same Disadvantage, to the great Loss of the Grantees. When a Divine is sent over to a Bishoprick here, with the hopes of five and twenty hundred Pounds a Year; upon his Arrival, he finds, alas! a dreadful Discount of ten or twelve per Cent. A Judge or a Commissioner of the Revenue has the same Cause of Complaint. Lastly,

The Ballad upon Cotter is vehemently suspected to be Irish Manufacture; and yet is allow'd to be Sung in our open Streets, under the very Nose of the Government. These are a few among the many Hardships we put upon that POOR Kingdom of England; for which I am confident every honest Man wishes a Remedy: And I hear there is a Project on Foot for Transpor-
ting

ting our best *Wheaten Straw* by Sea and Land-Carriage to *Dunstable*; and obliging us by a *Law* to take off yearly so many *Tun of Straw-Hats* for the use of our Women; which will be a great *Encouragement* to the Manufacture of that industrious Town.

I would be glad to learn among the Divines whether a *Law to bind Men without their own, Consent*, be Obligatory in *foro Conscientiæ*; because I find *Scripture*, *Sanderſon* and *Suarez* are wholly ſilent in the Matter. The Oracle of *Reason*, the great *Law of Nature*, and general Opinion of *Civilians*, wherever they treat of *limited Governments*, are indeed deciſive enough.

It is wonderful to obſerve the Biſſs among our People in favour of *Things*, *Perſons*, and *Wares* of all kinds that come from *England*. The *Printer* tells his *Hawkers* that he has got an *Excellent New Song* juſt brought from *London*. I have ſomewhat of a Tendency that way my ſelf; and upon hearing a *Coxcomb* from thence diſplaying himſelf with great volubility upon the *Park*, the *Play-Houſe*, the *Opera*, the *Gaming Ordinaries*, it was apt to beget in me a kind of Veneration for his Parts and Accompliſhments. 'Tis not many Years, ſince I remember a *Perſon* who by his Style and Literature ſeems to have been *Correſtor* of a Hedge-

Hedge-Prefs in some *Blind-Alley* about *Little-Britain*, proceed gradually to be an *Author*, at least a *Translator* of a lower Rate, tho' somewhat of a larger Bulk, than any that now *flourishes* in *Grub-street*; and upon the strength of this Foundation, come over *here*, erect himself up into an *Orator* and *Politician*, and lead a *Kingdom* after him. This, I am told, was the *very Motive* that prevailed on the *Author* of a Play called, *Love in a Hollow-Tree*, to do us the *Honour* of a Visit; presuming with very good Reason, that *he was a Writer of a superior Class*. I know *Another*, who for thirty Years past, hath been the *common Standard of Stupidity in England* where he was never heard a Minute in any *Assembly*, or by any *Party* with *common Christian Treatment*; yet upon his Arrival hither, could put on a *Face of Importance and Authority*, talk'd more than six, without either *Gracefulness, Propriety, or Meaning*; and at the same time be admired and followed as the *Pattern of Eloquence and Wisdom*.

Nothing hath humbled me so much, or shewn a greater Disposition to a *contemptuous Treatment of Ireland* in some *Ministers*, than that high Style of several Speeches from the *Throne*, deliver'd, as usual, after the *Royal Assent*, in some periods of the two last *Reigns*.

Such

Such high Exaggerations of the prodigious *Condescensions* in the Prince, to pass *those good Laws*, would have but an odd sound at *Westminster*: Neither do I apprehend how any *good Law* can pass, wherein the *Kings*, Interest is not as much concern'd as that of the *People*. I remember after a Speech on the like Occasion, deliver'd by my L——d W——, (I think it was his Last) he desired Mr. *Addison* to ask my Opinion of it: My Answer was, *That his Excellency had very honestly forfeited his Head on account of one Paragraph; wherein he asserted by plain Consequence a Dispensing Power in the Queen.* His Lordship own'd it was true, but Swore the Words were put into his Mouth by direct Orders from Court. From whence it is clear, that some *Ministers* in those Times, were apt, from their *high Elevation*, to look down upon this Kingdom as if it had been one of their *Colonies of Out-casts in America*. And I observed a little of the same Turn of Spirit in some *Great Men*, from whom I expected better; altho' to do them Justice, it proved no Point of Difficulty to make them correct their *Idea*, whereof the *whole Nation* quickly found the Benefit——But that is forgotten. How the Style hath since run, I am wholly a Stranger, having never seen a Speech since the last of the Queen

I would now expostulate a little with our Country Landlords, who by unmeasurable *Screwing* and *Racking* their Tenants all over the Kingdom, have already reduced the miserable *People* to a worse Condition than the *Peasants* in *France*, or the *Vassals* in *Germany* and *Poland*; so that the whole *Species* of what we call *Substantial Farmers*, will in a very few Years be utterly at an end. It was pleasant to observe these Gentlemen *labouring* with all their *Might* for preventing the *Bishops* from Letting their *Reveneus* at a moderate half Value, (whereby the whole *Order* would in an Age have been reduced to manifest Beggary) at the very instant when they were every where *canting* their own Lands upon short Leases, and Sacrificing their *oldest Tenants* for a *Penny an Acre* advance. I know not how it comes to pass, (and yet perhaps I know well enough) that *Slaves* have a natural Disposition to be *Tyrants*; and that when my *Betters* give me a Kick, I am apt to revenge it with six upon my *Footman*; although perhaps he may be an honest and diligent Fellow. I have heard *Great Divines* affirm, that *nothing is so likely to call down an universal Judgment from Heaven upon a Nation as universal Oppression*; and whether this be not already verified

in part, *their Worships* the Landlords are now at full leifure to confider. Whoever Travels this Country, and obferves the *Face* of Nature, or the *Faces*, and Habits, and Dwellings of the *Natives*, will hardly think himfelf in a Land where either *Law*, *Religion*, or *common Humanity* is profefled.

I cannot forbear faying one Word upon a *Thing* they call a *Bank*, which I hear is projecting in this Town. I never faw the *Propofals*, nor underftand any one particular of their Scheme: What I wifh for at prefent, is only a fufficient Provision of *Hemp*, and *Caps*, and *Bells*, to diftribute according to the feveral Degrees of *Honefty* and *Prudence* in *some Perfons*. I hear only of a monftrous Sum already named; and if *OTHERS*, do not foon hear of it too, and *hear* it with a *Vengeance*, then am I a Gentleman of lefs Sagacity than my felf and very few befides, take me to be. And the Jelt will be ftill the better, if it be true, as judicious Perfons have affured me that one half of this Money will be *real*, and the other half only *Gasconnade*. The Matter will be likewise much mended, if the Merchants continue to carry off our Gold, and our Goldfmiths to melt down our heavy Silver.

FINIS

Houses of the Oireachtas